



Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee

Date: March 20, 2024.

Time: 7:15 PM – 9:15 PM

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation (Zoom).

Minutes

Attendees:

- Executive committee: Christopher Tonkin (chair), Linda Epstein., Jack Johnson., Doug Mayo-Wells., Scott Smith (TAC liaison), Muris Kobaslija.
- Town of Arlington: John Alessi (Senior Transportation Planner).
- Members of the Public: Cristina Burwell., Len Greenberg, Stephan Miller., Anton Rapetov., Steve Revilak.

1. Greetings and introductions, ground rules for online meetings.

Christopher Tonkin notifies attendees that the meeting is held online pursuant to the order of Governor (as extended) and that Doug Mayo-Wells is taking minutes; the meeting is being recorded for the purposes of verifying the minutes; and the recording will be deleted after the minutes are approved. Tonkin confirms the committee members and others in attendance for the meeting.

2. Approval of Outstanding Minutes.

Not available for review – no vote taken.

3. Report from COBWEB Officer.

No officer was available to attend.

4. Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Report.

The Select Board endorsed the Bike Lane Design Guide in February.

TAC is coordinating with DPW on bike lane painting for Medford St, Warren St. Discussion is ongoing about rescinding the special speed regulations which would potentially reduce speed limits on Broadway and Park Avenue to 25

mph. Also discussing 20mph speed safety zones. Concerns have been raised with regard to motor vehicle crashes, and bike and pedestrian injuries and fatalities. It's noted that some traffic calming measures/redesign may be appropriate given, e.g., the shoulders and downhill grades on Park Ave.

Also, the Broadway Neighbors Coalition is holding a meeting at the Fox Library community room Saturday 3/24 at 10am to discuss redesign concepts for Broadway.

Doug Greenfield (former committee member) reported a car attempting to enter the Bikeway from Frazer Rd (by Schwamb Mill). Additional signage may be warranted.

5. Bikeway Block Party.

The Bikeway Block Party, similar in scope to the 25th anniversary celebration, will be on Sept 15 from 11am–4pm. Venues throughout the bikeway will host a variety of events (arts, music, sport/fitness). ABAC could potentially table at the event. The team is working to finalize the list of venues and secure permits, and is already coordinating with Katie Luczai (Commission for Arts & Culture/Economic Development Coordinator). Arlington's Public Information Officer can assist in publicizing the event. Cristina Burwell of the Munroe Center for the Arts can be contacted at cristina@munroecenter.org with recommendations for potential participants (strong preference for artists, coaches, etc. from the Bikeway communities). A website is forthcoming.

6. Bike Parking at Town Hall (reference to Town Meeting).

The large bike racks at Town Hall were not reinstalled after the plaza repaving. The racks by the flagpole/annex are not easy to see from Mass Ave, and the number of available spaces is likely inadequate for some events, including Town Meeting. ABAC would like to recommend temporary racks be supplied for events, as well as upgrading the quantity of available spaces and the ease of locating them. Adam MacNeill notes that bike racks at Town Hall can be a very visible demonstration of the Town's commitment to sustainability.

ABAC voted that Adam MacNeill, assisted by Jack Johnson, will draft a letter to the Town Manager's office reflecting the committee's concerns. Proposed by Adam MacNeill, seconded by Christopher Tonkin, carried unanimously.

It is also noted that the new DPW site does not appear to have bike racks.

Action: John Alessi will raise this concern with DPW.

Further on the topic of bike racks, approximately 14 will be installed in Arlington Heights. Some require concrete pads for installation, planned for

spring/summer. A pending grant application could also fund at least a hundred bike racks throughout the Town over 1 to 3 years. A concern is raised that there may not be racks available at Ryder St; adequate bike parking there will definitely be a priority when new racks are sited. Additionally, a community preservation act (CPA) grant has been awarded covering preliminary design for improvements on the Bikeway at Ryder St/Burns area, Conditional on Town Meeting approval, funds would be available July 1st.

7. Prepare an E-Bike Report for the Select Board?

ABAC has not been formally tasked with providing recommendations on ebike regulations. The BlueBikes contract was just resigned. The next overall procurement for the Boston-area system is in 2026. BlueBikes appears to be attempting to balance ebike availability throughout the system.

Jack Johnson suggests it would be useful to review Lexington's Ebike recommendation document (which may be in draft state) and determine whether ABAC is in alignment.

8. ABAC Budget/Spending

It is noted that the funds ABAC currently holds (approximately \$3,000) originated with a private donation directly to ABAC, not from the Town. ABAC has proposed a bike rodeo educational event in conjunction with MassBike, which would cost approximately \$400, although venue rental costs have not been confirmed. It is unlikely to consume the available funds. ABAC may consider holding annual events until the funds are exhausted, and perhaps seek funding to continue them indefinitely. It is also suggested that a radar gun could be purchased so that ABAC could assess bike speeds.

9. Planning Department Updates.

RFP for Mystic River Path has been released, an information session was held, and proposals are due April 19th. Expect to have a contract in June or July.

The Mass Ave/Appleton consultant is working on the final design addressing comments from ABAC, residents, Town Staff, etc. Planning to apply for Mass Works construction funding in June, for availability in September. However construction timeframe will require coordination with MWRA waterline work.

Bike racks in the Heights were covered above.

An application was submitted to Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for a project which allows municipalities to access funding to design roadway projects. Arlington's application proposes a redesign of Broadway, and appears likely to be selected. Up to 1.4 million dollars could be awarded. Additionally coordinating with DPW on interim improvements to Broadway from the town line to North Union St, hopefully including bike lanes. (The overall

project would follow MassDOT project development and design standards, so construction would likely be 5 to 10 years out.) Bike lanes could potentially require parking removal. It is also noted that coordination with Somerville's Broadway design is needed. The intersection timing is currently nonstarted, a dedicated left turn lane eastbound may be adopted.

Bluebike station redeployment is being scheduled. Still trying to find permanent locations to avoid the cost of removal/redeployment, but Broadway/Grafton St is challenging. Pads will be installed for other stations. A location will be created at Swan Place/Minuteman, in addition to installation of an informational kiosk (as part of the Minuteman wayfinding project) and updated racks.

Implementation was delayed for a grant awarded in conjunction with Newton and Watertown, and contractual documents must be resubmitted, but this should eventually fund at least 3 new stations, likely including Mill Street, and the High School. It should also offset some of the Town's ongoing operational costs (fees per dock).

It is noted that the Wayfinding project grant is controlled by the Chamber of Commerce so visibility into execution has been somewhat limited.

The planning department is also working to update the town Master Plan. Applications for an advisory committee are being accepted, and a transportation perspective would be welcomed.

Concerns are raised about adequate notification of work disrupting the bikeway and posting detour advisories. The upcoming waterway work could involve significant disruption. Lexington worked extensively with MWRA to plan a detour involving painted lanes on Mass Ave (closures are planned from Nov 2025 through May 2026)

10.2024 Tour of Arlington Planning.

Tour of Arlington is planned for Sunday May 19. An earlier 5K running event should not create conflicts. Interested ABAC members will meet at 9:30 Sunday April 21 to test/finalize the route. It is suggested that posting signs could increase participation in the event.

11.Other Business.

Stephan Miller notes that the centerline on the Bikeway was last painted at least 6 years ago and is almost completely eroded. (So are the safety markings at Trader Joe's) John Alessi and Christopher Tonkin are working to prioritize items for a capital planning committee request and this would likely be included as well as pavement markings and intersections, repairing root heaves, etc. Working on cost estimates for these items now.

Muris Kobaslija mentions the Camberville ebike library <https://camberville.ebikelibrary.org/> as a great resource for people to learn about ebikes, particularly cargo bikes, before committing to a purchase.

Doug Mayo-Wells advises submitting requests on the Town website to have problems addressed, as this creates a record.

Adjourned.